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ALLAN GRANT'S VISIT TO NORWICH, AND HIS FIRST INTERVIEW WITH ANNIE ASHTON.

MARRIAGE;

OR,

THE BACHELOR IN SEARCH OF A WIFE.

CHAPTER II.

THE season was in a May mood at last. Very
No. 194, 1855.

slow it had been to arouse itself from its wintry
humour; and so biting and sharp had been its
breath, that the delicate sensitive little buds and
tender birds quite feared to face it, and kept close
hidden in their green folds or soft nests, for

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lack of courage to encounter the usually placid month.

Whilst Allan Grant was whirling away on the railroad, on his way to his mother's relations in the country, those relations were not without their whirl and worry of expectation and excitement relative to his visit.

It was a noble part of Allan's disposition, and one which had marked him from a child, that, whilst grateful for kindness, and neither reserved nor cold to strangers, he had a wonderful tenacity for old friendships and associations. He did not forget, now that he was the possessor of his uncle's wealth, and was about to take his place amongst many of the most influential and respected of London citizens, that in a little corner of his island home there dwelt the aged and widowed parent of his own mother. She might not be particularly refined, and certainly she was not rich in this world's goods; intelligence was not one of her characteristics; but "she is the mother of her who gave me birth," he said; "and my first duty, after my long absence from England, is undoubtedly to her." He recollected, too, with the faithful memory of gratitude, many a little act of kindness and generosity on her part, when he was a school-boy in the same old cathedral town as that in which she resided; how, with more liberality than judgment, she had regularly sent him cakes and parcels of *comestibles* every Saturday afternoon, treated him to a welcome Sunday dinner once a month, and had in fact, with small means, done far more for him in every way, than his uncle and aunt Grant who lived in the same town, and who had at least more in their power than a poor widow with a narrow income.

The dear old lady was now watching very anxiously for his arrival, and fidgeted her sister, Miss or Mistress Catherine Meadows, by her incessant references to the old-fashioned time-piece.

"Janet, go and give my compliments to Mr. Elgar, and say I should be much obliged to him for a Bradshaw. I hope there's no accident."

Bradshaw came; but Mrs. Meadows understood as much of Bradshaw as a Hindoo would understand of the "Times," and repeated her visit to the clock.

"Dear, dear! I hope there's no accident. I'm sure, what a dreadful account that was, Catherine, about the train that had the collision in the tunnel last year."

Miss Catherine, a stiff old maiden lady, many years sister Meadows's junior, gave a murmur of assent. Her temper was unquestionably bad now. There was a rumour, however, that it had been worse.

At this moment, when poor Mrs. Meadows was beginning to fume and fret, and Miss Catherine, who piqued herself upon solidity of character, to expostulate, a bright face peeped in—a face that would almost have lighted up the grey cathedral itself, let the niche be never so dark in which it showed itself.

"May I come in, Mrs. Meadows?"

"To be sure you may, Annie. Why, I have been expecting you all day; but I dare say you have had more interesting occupation than that of reading the news to two old ladies."

Annie laughed merrily.

"Now, shall I tell you what I have been doing, dear Mrs. Meadows? So you think I have been frolicking all day. Ah! you are wrong for once. I have been helping Martha to house clean."

"House clean!"

"Yes; and you can't think how nice we have made it all look. Papa seldom goes out, you know; and such work it was when we really did get fairly in among his old books, bottles, and retorts, test tubes and chemicals; and such smells! Oh dear, Mrs. Meadows, 'tis like the smell of fifty years ago."

"And pray is the smell of fifty years ago likely to be worse than the smell of to-day?" asked Miss Catherine, sharply; for she thought the maiden a flippant silly creature, and condemned her rattle as idle talking and jesting. "Pray, Annie, have you read the book I lent you?"

"No, Miss Catherine."

"Have you read any part of it?"

"I did begin; but it seemed so very—that is, I could not understand it. You see, Miss Catherine, it may be very wrong, but I am not quite able to enter into calling the world a 'vale of tears.'"

"But you must learn it some day. You will have experience enough of it, I can tell you. I wish I could see you more serious, more sedate, my dear. It is very important for a motherless girl like you to be watchful. Remember how all your actions are commented on."

"It is not very kind to comment on the actions of a motherless girl, is it? But I forgot my message: Miss Hamilton's kind love to you, and she will not be able to call to-night, as her mamma is not so well; so she sent me instead, and hoped you would let me read the paper to you."

She had just thrown off her hat, and had seated herself on a low stool at the old lady's feet, whilst Miss Catherine had composed herself to a kind of afternoon dose, when a quick step was heard, and an exclamation from Mrs. Meadows caused Annie to start up, and at the same moment Allan Grant stood in the door-way.

"Times," and everything and every one, were forgotten in the joy and delight with which the fond grandmother greeted her long absent grandson; but it was unnatural to expect him to be so much absorbed as to forget the presence of the girlish beauty, who, gathering her shawl around her, and tying on her brown hat, began, with a blush and comical glance at the affectionate demonstrations of the old lady, to prepare for departure.

Thoroughly might any one but Miss Catherine, that woman of a sorrowful spirit, understand how it was that Annie could not call the world a vale of tears. She was truly a picture of contentment and of joy, such as is not often met with either before or after sunny seventeen. The motherlessness which had been her portion from birth had left no cloud; and her childhood, passed with her father in the dim grey cathedral close at Norwich, had no darkness nor dimness for her. She had walked about those ruined walls, and looked among those calmly beautiful arches, until she had imbibed a spirit of the beautiful, without, however, a tinge of sadness or melancholy.

Sadness, indeed, she knew but by name. The world was spring time and gladness to her; and for companionship, she desired no better than that of her father, a man of taste and refinement, who, absorbed as he often was in his studies and philosophical pursuits, could unbend to his only daughter at times, and enter into her peculiar thoughts and feelings as few others could have done. He had seen too much of the defects of female education to desire to subject his child to the same routine. When, therefore, the instruction of old Martha—a superior kind of upper servant, who had taught his wife her A, B, C, and had lived in his family ever since his marriage—became insufficient, he yielded to the importunities of his relations, and sent Annie to a day school in the neighbourhood. Two years of such life, however, were so wearisome to the little lady, that he removed her from Mrs. Morris's at the age of fourteen, determined that books and nature should be her teachers. But the work of education was imperfect, and with fine natural talents and a disposition of uncommon sweetness, the child grew into maidenhood undisciplined and untrained; even in her studies pursuing no beaten track, but indulging in a kind of desultory reading, which was a continual mental feast without any assimilating process whatever.

It is perhaps marvellous that the almost indiscriminate reading in which she indulged, should have had no effect in tincturing her mind with thoughts otherwise than pure and innocent; but it was nevertheless true, and she would have blushed to join in the conversation of the young ladies at Miss Morris's, who talked of love and romance and marriage in secret, and affected most absurd and, to Annie, inexplicable prudery in public. Had Miss Ashton been created for her father's plaything, and for her own enjoyment of a dream-life alone, this kind of training might have been harmless enough; but a future, and a woman's future, lay before her, with a woman's duties, a woman's hopes, and a woman's sorrows; and how was her dreamy youth fitting her for this? What could she know of earnest life in the old ivy-covered house of her city home, where, under the shadow of the grey cathedral, she wandered amid ruined cloisters, stole in the evening hour among the gothic arches, or sat at her lattice window, her head resting on her hands, conning the old English ballad or the metrical romance, until she almost lost her individuality, and lived so much in the past as at times to forget the present?

After all, it was woman's influence that Annie Ashton needed; and perhaps man—all honour to his firmness and his skill in nobler works—never makes a greater blunder than when he attempts a girl's education alone. He may rear a tolerably substantial and well-proportioned fabric, but there are touches—and these touches make the beauty of the whole—which woman's hand alone can give; deep hidden springs, which woman's power alone can open; soft gentle sympathies, which woman's voice alone can call forth. On the beautiful girl, so formed to love and to be loved, the blank was evident; the glory of womanliness was absent from her brow.

Whilst you have been reading this, however,

Annie Ashton had sped away like a wild goat, leaving Allan Grant, with all his sage theories and wise resolutions, on the dangerous border-land of fascination. He needed Margaret to whisper his own words in his ear: "Love at first sight! impossible! No sensible man will fall in love with mere beauty!" Beware, Allan Grant.

"Who is that young lady that I frightened away, grandma?" asked Allan, carelessly, at tea time.

The old lady, after having satisfied herself that her grandson would not starve, and seen him safely through one dish of poached eggs and prepared for another, replied: "A daughter of Mr. Ashton, the great antiquary. He lives next door to us."

"Have they lived here long? I don't remember him whilst I was at school here."

"I dare say not. He very seldom went out at that time, and it is only of late years he has begun to show himself much, and to live like other folks. He does it for his child's sake; and it is time. I never saw such a wild thing as she is. I am sure it is a good thing the Hamiltons have taken her up, poor girl. Why didn't Mr. Ashton send her to school, like other girls, I should like to know? They are quite the laughing-stock of the place."

"Are they? She does not seem to me ridiculous by any means."

Miss Catherine looked curiously at him, and replied: "Your memory is shorter than I expected. Do you remember a little girl being missed one Sunday afternoon after service, and such a hue and cry being raised for her, and the place searched high and low; and when they went as a last hope to look into the cathedral, she was found asleep in one of the stalls?"

"To be sure I remember that; but I had forgotten that was Miss Ashton."

"Well, she does just such eccentricities nowadays, only of an older sort. There is such an outcry always for the beautiful—such roaming and straggling over hills to see 'beauty.' Beauty! nonsense! I should like to set her to work to make her father a set of shirts; that would work the folly out of her in no time. Fancy her now a wife! You may believe me, sister Meadows, she asked me the other day what sort of birds giblets were."

Allan could not help smiling at an ignorance of the interior of a goose of which even he could not plead guilty; but, tea being over, he proposed to pay a visit to his uncle Grant before dark; and his grandmother, literally tired with pleasure—the pleasure of welcoming him, and doing the honours of her small *ménage* to the rich man of the family—sate herself down in an easy chair, and composed herself to a quiet doze.

Miss Catherine was in no mood to sleep. She was speculating on the dangerous fascination of the next-door neighbour, and thinking what an excessively silly thing it would be if that child were really to entrap the young heir. She resolved to lose no opportunity of depreciating the value of this pretty plaything, the antiquary's daughter, and of opening his eyes, before it should be too late, to her faults and deficiencies in every possible way. If she had wished to smoothe the

path to courtship and a final engagement, she could scarcely have chosen a better course. Few women, and no men that we know of, are to be talked out of one idea into another.

As he passed out on his way to his uncle's house, which was at about a mile's distance from the town, he saw the slight little figure of Annie Ashton, with her arm round that of another female form, whose face was hidden on her shoulder. She seemed to be comforting her, by the glance that Allan could obtain over the blind of the low dining-room window. Her hair, which was of a golden hue, was lit up by the beams of the setting sun, and her small child-like figure was bent over the person in sorrow, whose frame, as she sat beside her, seemed convulsed with emotion. There is no vignette so beautiful in the picture of a woman's life as that of the consoler; and Allan Grant felt this to his heart's depth.

Mrs. Grant was seated at her accustomed evening occupation of needlework, when her nephew made his appearance. He would have preferred meeting her without such an extreme show of gratification, which was almost overpowering, especially as for many years no particular intercourse had taken place between the families. If it were in his nature, which it was not, to be suspicious or censorious, he might have set down a little of the superfluous delight to the remembrance of a certain document lying in Doctors' Commons; but it really did not strike him.

His cousins were none of them at home; and it struck Allan Grant unpleasantly, that the mother of this large family should be so hard at needlework, whilst the girls, three in number, were at a lecture on mesmerism in the city. The younger children were in bed, and Mr. Grant was drowsily walking in his garden. He was some years younger than Allan's father, but there was a worn, aged appearance about him, which made Allan doubt whether there might not be some mistake about their relative ages.

Allan had yet to learn how sharp must be the struggle of a father of a large family with limited means; how many buffets and discouragements a man anxious to rise must meet; and how, between the war of prudence and expediency, and the care to *seem* genteel and prosperous, the battle must oftentimes be a hot one. Mr. Grant had only lately made the discovery that the house in which his ten children had been born was too small for their requirements, and not genteel enough for their position; and to make all this agree with his narrow means, to pay butcher and baker, and to dress and educate his girls and boys, required a stretch of ingenuity on Mrs. Grant's part, as those best knew who lived in her scantily-supplied kitchen, and ate at her often meagre table. Ah! there is an altar raised in more than one English household to appearances, the sufferings of whose victims, in the process of immolation, it would take too long to enumerate.

The conversation rather flagged. Allan was sensible of feeling extremely weary of his aunt's company, who, although she passed for a very clever woman, was doubtless a fatiguing one, from the peculiar habit of mind which induced her to turn everything into an argument. Allan felt some compassion for his uncle during the artillery

of words to which the meek and not very sapient man was exposed. He looked up occasionally, as though to ascertain Allan's opinion of it all; and meanwhile, the lady of the house darned, and talked, and propounded, until nine o'clock, when preparations were made for supper.

The family had all passed under review by this time, and Allan Grant had, so to speak, materials for a biographical sketch of each of his young cousins; but they were mere groupings of a picture in which it was plain that he was intended to look on Jane, the eldest daughter, as the principal figure. Her acquirements as a musician and as a linguist were only second to her admirable qualifications for domestic life. It was rather too obvious, however, what all this meant, when her mother suddenly asked Allan if he had any matrimonial project in view, and recommended him by all means to marry young—a step which would save him many temptations, and one which she said, with a little sentimental glance at her husband, she had never repented of.

Allan thought it would only have been fair to ask his uncle his opinion; but at this moment a sound of voices was heard, and the young Grants, all eager and talkative, flocked into the room.

If Allan had pictured Jane pretty, the illusion was soon dispelled. She was decidedly plain, but would have looked less so if it had not been for a very glaring and conspicuous dress, and the attempt at style, which, in her case, utterly failed. Her sister, Alice, was better looking, and was evidently clever; but had a short, assured tone, which was anything but becoming in a girl of eighteen, and which reminded Allan of words in the "Charming Woman," which had reference to her "rather sharp tone." Young men there were, too, of ages varying from sixteen to twenty-five, each and all consciously clever; and the younger daughter, Clara, with boarding-school written on her face, talked with as little diffidence as if she had been twenty-four instead of fourteen.

The introductions were soon over, and they all gathered round the supper table. The lecture was the subject of remark, and swallowed up all else. Accustomed as our young traveller was to the clatter of a *table d'hôte* and all manner of society, he felt himself bewildered by the variety of subjects that were introduced, all, however, bearing upon mesmerism or phrenology. Alice determined to begin its study and practice forthwith; and then ensued an argument on clairvoyance and phreno-mesmerism, the magnetic influence of mind over mind, the separate existence, the first, second, and third stages of the magnetic state, etc. They all seemed in thorough accord, when suddenly Mr. Harold, the elder brother, started a difficulty. At once they took sides, as at a game of cricket, and the contest was a sharp one—diverted only by the suggestion of the head of the family as to its legitimacy. Mrs. Grant was really delighted at the argument, and watched the combatants throughout with a sort of applauding smile; whilst Allan thought that, clever as it all might be, controversy was a dangerous game for members of the same family, and that what began in argument might very possibly end in quarrelling.

Alice having settled by this time that every one was wrong but herself—a comfortable conclusion

at which she usually arrived—with some calmness, although Jane sate with tears in her eyes at her defeat, almost startled Allan by a sudden demand as to how he liked Germany, and what he thought of its literature and theology. He answered generally with respect to the country and literature; of theology he confessed no very profound knowledge, and hoped he might thus escape; but, as a hidden spring sets visible machinery in motion, so began many tongues to move upon the German school, until poor Allan wished himself with his grandmother in the Close.

There was little fear of his falling in love at first sight here, at any rate; and, as he pursued his way to Mrs. Meadows's house, he pondered seriously on the domestic scenes to which he had been witness since his return to England: Marion, with her languid, miserable mornings contrasted with her evening excitement; and these cousins of his, learning to love excitement too, although in another form, but as little calculated for the adornment and solace of home as his married sister.

Yet more and more tempting became the picture which his fancy drew of single life with his sister Margaret at the Elms, until, as he passed the window again, he saw the same slight form which had fascinated him in the afternoon. It was now beside a tall, thin, elderly gentleman, whose grey hair she was fondly smoothing with her small hand, whilst he was deeply engaged in reading. He blushed to himself at the idle curiosity which prompted him to observe all this, and yet he could scarcely resist turning again to look at the lovely girl; and marvellously, as he did so, did the prospect of single life with Margaret grow dim, and the castle begin to rise in which he and the maiden with the golden hair were the lord and lady. Little did he know, and little did Annie Ashton guess, what a shadow hovered over the threshold of that quiet home, and how soon the calm brow of childhood should be marked with the grave thought of the woman. Well for her was it that all this was hidden.

The next morning Allan, who kept a pretty close watch over the proceedings of his next-door neighbour, observed a fly stop, heavily laden with boxes and bags of a size and number betokening a long stay, and a grave scholarly-looking gentleman stepped coolly out, followed by a tall, elderly lady of a stately step and proud dignified presence, very like the gentleman in person, but scarcely old enough, Allan thought, for his mother. On applying to Mrs. Meadows, who was engaged in dusting her old china—a work which she never left to Janet—she walked leisurely to the window, and, peering over her spectacles, exclaimed:—

"Why! that is professor Ruthven come home from Madeira. He is an old friend of Mr. Ashton's, and I suppose they will stay with him until they find a house. He has been travelling four years. Was there a lady with him?"

"Yes: the lady is gone into the house."

"Ah! that's his mother—a proud piece of goods *she* is. Well, I don't envy Miss Ashton and old Martha their life with her for a visitor; that's all I can say. She is particularity itself.

What could Mr. Ashton be thinking of, to ask them?"

Allan did not trouble himself with the inquiry; but, vexed and disappointed that Miss Ashton had not made her appearance during the morning, went out for a solitary ramble on the Thorpe road.

SALE OF AN ISLAND.

THOUGHT has sometimes roved over the vast variety of objects subject to the process of buying and selling and getting gain. Houses, villas, mansions, farms, and estates for sale and purchased, is one of the commonest and least noticeable of the every-day affairs of life. In addition, in many countries unhappily, some of which rank with the civilised, the bones and blood of men, women, and children are just as commonly to be had at a regular trade price, or by competition at public auction. Besides, also, the staple commodities in the home market, there is always a long list of sundries of a very miscellaneous description, some of which are occasionally odd or extraordinary, though perfectly legitimate objects of commerce. Now and then there is a purchaser wanted for a newly imported living lion, tiger, or elephant, an ant-eater, chimpanzee, or rattle-snake. Fragments of petrified forests, or the fossil remains of huge monsters belonging to a defunct race of saurians, are likewise offered to the highest bidder; and sometimes the medley of disposable wares is rendered more heterogeneous by a lock of hair, a wig, a tooth, a skull, or the shred of a garment, as the relic of some by-gone celebrity. But it is not often that an entire island, with any pretensions to figure on a map, is a purchasable lot. Indeed, so rarely is this the case, that the event arrests attention as somewhat unique, though the area to be disposed of may be very inconceivable when compared with that of the inland patrimonies which are so frequently submitted to the hammer. There is something tempting, at least so it strikes us, in the acquisition of such property, where other circumstances are equal. It has an inviting air of independent integrity, for trespassers are kept at a respectful distance by the engirdling ocean, and jostling with border lands and their proprietors is similarly prevented. The possessor, standing in the centre, may occasionally entertain the thought,

"I am monarch of all I survey,"

every object within the range of the visible horizon having been conveyed to him by his title-deeds. Such an estate seems a kind of miniature kingdom, peculiarly the property of the owner, from the circumstance of its being untouched by other proprietaries. We write according to our impressions, not from experience, having no pretensions to the old Scotch title of Lord of the Isles, or to the ownership of the least bit of rock partly rising above the waves.

It is rather more than a dozen years ago since Lundy island, one of the British isles, was purchased by its present possessor, after previously repeatedly changing hands. The price of nine thousand four hundred guineas was paid for it, and the bargain included the granite mass, with every stick, stone, rat, and rabbit upon it,

with the exception of the lighthouse, which belongs to the Trinity House corporation. We shall perhaps introduce some of our readers to a novel part of our home territory, as well as of our local history, if we define the position of this spot—a mere speck on our maps, if introduced at all—describe its character, and chronicle its incidents.

Lundy island, though in the direct track of vessels navigating the southern part of the British channel, and therefore really in the way, is practically an out-of-the-way place, not being accessible except in a boat specially hired for the visit. It lies nearly equidistant from Hartland point and Morte point, on the north coast of Devon, the intermediate sea-space being Bideford or Barnstaple bay, known aforesaid as the Golden bay of the French, from the number of prizes captured in it by their privateers. There the estuary of the Severn terminates, the channel opening its jaws as if with eager appetite to receive the vast billows and clearer waters of the ocean. The island is about eleven miles north-north-west of the high grassy platform of Hartland point, the nearest part of the mainland, and eighteen miles from Clovelly, the nearest port. It is not a slightly constructed agglomeration of washed-up sand, but a substantial, compact, and somewhat stern mass of granite and slate, the former predominating in its composition. The sea-cliffs are wild, sombre, and precipitous, occasionally rising to the height of two hundred feet, and so surrounded by other insulated rocks, that, according to a common saying, there is no entrance but for friends, owing to the difficulty of access. At the landing-place on the southern side, two men can scarcely walk abreast. Lametry and Rat islands are rocky detachments adjoining this point. The Knoll Sins, Gannets, Seals, and Gull rocks are on the eastern side. The northern has a dangerous reef called the Hen and Chickens, a submarine prolongation of the island, with a granite mass rising above the waves in the shape of a pyramid, styled the Constable, from its isolated position, like that of a sentinel on duty at an outpost. The Needles are on the western side; and at the south-west extremity there is a chasm in the cliffs, opening towards the sea, with the unintelligible name of the Devil's Lime-kiln. Opposite is the Shutter, a detached rock, so called from the supposition that it might be placed in the opening, and would exactly fit it.

The main island, Lundy itself, extends about two miles and a half in length from north to south, by one mile in breadth from east to west, and contains an area of 920 statute acres. The northern part rises considerably above the level of the sea, and several rills flow from the higher to the lower ground. Plantations have been formed, but the trees are too much exposed to keen winds to flourish. Rabbits and puffins abound, and rats are numerous. The few residents are chiefly employed in shooting the puffins for their feathers, and the rabbits for their skins. The lighthouse is on a ridge of the island near the southern end. The tower, erected in the year 1820, rises to the height of 89 feet; but, owing to the elevation of the ground, the top of the lantern is 540 feet above high water-mark. It has two white lights—an upper, revolving every two minutes, and a lower

one fixed, visible only from the westward. In clear weather they may be seen at the distance of thirty miles. The lenticular apparatus of Fresnel was introduced here in the year 1842; and the ordinary cost of maintenance for the whole establishment in the year following amounted to 1193*l.* 15*s.* 11*d.* We suppose that one of the instructions of the Trinity corporation to light-keepers will apply to this station:—"The keepers are to attend a place of worship upon each Sunday in turn; and where this rule shall, by reason of distance, be incompatible with the performance of the lighthouse service, the principal light-keeper shall, at least once every Sunday, assemble his own family, and his assistants and their families, in his own dwelling or other convenient place, and there read to them throughout the church service for the day; also a service or homily from the volume provided by the corporation for that purpose."

Though small, secluded, bleak, and uninviting for a residence, Lundy has been connected with the affairs of life from an early period. It has a history, not of course crowded with events, but presenting a few incidents of a somewhat remarkable kind. In the early part of the reign of Henry III., it belonged to a noble family named Morisco, one of whom, sir William, a knight, conspired against the life of the king, and became an outlaw and pirate. He seized the island, erected a fort, and made it his stronghold. Having collected a numerous band of desperadoes, he was for some years a terror to merchantmen, and defied all attempts to dislodge him from an almost impregnable position. Vessels passing along the channel were plundered of their cargoes, and their crews maltreated, while descents were made upon the adjoining mainland, which was ravaged for miles. In February, 1242, a royal order was issued to the earl of Devon and others, to guard the coasts in the neighbourhood of Lundy, for the protection of the king's subjects. Morisco was at length taken by stratagem, conveyed to London, and executed with sixteen of his gang. In June, 1242, the sheriff of Devon was directed to convey a galley which the pirate had commenced building at Lundy, to Ilfracombe to be finished. But lawlessness long reigned upon the seas, and the masters of trading vessels themselves were often guilty of plundering one another, rather than make an unprosperous voyage. A petition for redress exists from William de Huntingdon, dated about a century later, which states that he had gone to the port of Dublin, and that, while he was in the city paying the customs on his goods, John le Lung of Bristol captured his ship, carried off the merchandise, and afterwards burnt the vessel.

The island sheltered Edward II for a brief period from his mischievous wife and turbulent barons. In the great civil war it was held by lord Say and Seale for Charles I. But the most noticeable event in its history occurred in the reign of William and Mary, when it was captured by a party of Frenchmen, under circumstances highly creditable to the residents, and disgraceful in the extreme to the captors. One day, a ship of war appeared in the roadstead, showing Dutch colours. A message was sent ashore requesting some milk, as the captain was sick. It was at once supplied, and for several days afterwards, till the

crew informed the islanders that the captain had expired, and asked permission to inter the body in consecrated ground. This was also promptly acceded to, and the poor people assisted in carrying the coffin. They thought it rather a heavy burden, but had no suspicion respecting its contents, or of the good faith of those to whom they were showing hospitality. On reaching the chapel, St. Ann's, the Frenchmen requested the inhabitants to retire, alleging it to be the custom of their country that foreigners should not be present during a part of the religious ceremony, but informed them that they should be admitted to see the body interred. They accordingly withdrew, but were soon undeceived respecting the character and intentions of their guests. Suddenly the doors of the chapel were thrown open, and the pretended mourners, armed from the mock receptacle of the dead, rushed with triumphant shouts upon the astonished inhabitants, and made them prisoners. They then proceeded to add spoliation to treachery, hamstringed the bullocks and horses, threw the sheep and goats into the sea, tossed the guns over the cliffs, stripped the islanders even of their clothing, and left them in destitution when there was nothing more left to ravage. This is certainly one of the most dastardly actions on record.

The ruins of St. Ann's chapel, of Morisco's castle, and of a building called Johnny Groat's House, without a tradition to explain its purpose, with a few dismantled guns at the landing-place, are some remaining antiquities on the island. In 1794 it contained seven houses and twenty-three inhabitants. No return was made at the first five censuses of the present century, but at the sixth, in 1851, there were five houses, occupied by sixteen males and eighteen females, or a total of thirty-four. To those who are fond of exploring places beyond the range of the travelling crowd—peeping into the old nooks and corners of man's great empire—Lundy island will well repay a visit; and it especially invites the attention of geological tourists, who may study to advantage within its circuit the granite and slate rocks at their junction.

A DAY AT THE CAVE OF ADELSBERG.

THIS most stupendous work of nature is situated in Carniola, a province belonging to Austria, and persons travelling from Trieste to Laibach usually stop at Adelsberg *en route*. Let no one visiting that locality fail to pause and turn aside to this grotto, for the spectacle that will reward him is so rarely beautiful, so sublime, and so wonderful, that he will never regret the delay. On a brilliant morning, late in the month of August, a party, of which the writer was one, assembled in front of the small and very clean inn of Adelsberg, with our curiosity raised to the highest pitch by the eloquence of the descriptions that greeted us as we approached the wonders we were about to visit. We had taken the precaution to send word the night before, that a large party was about to visit the grotto, and were anxious to have it illuminated in such a manner as would display to the best advantage the marvellous beauty of the scene, for we had been informed that a neglect of such pre-

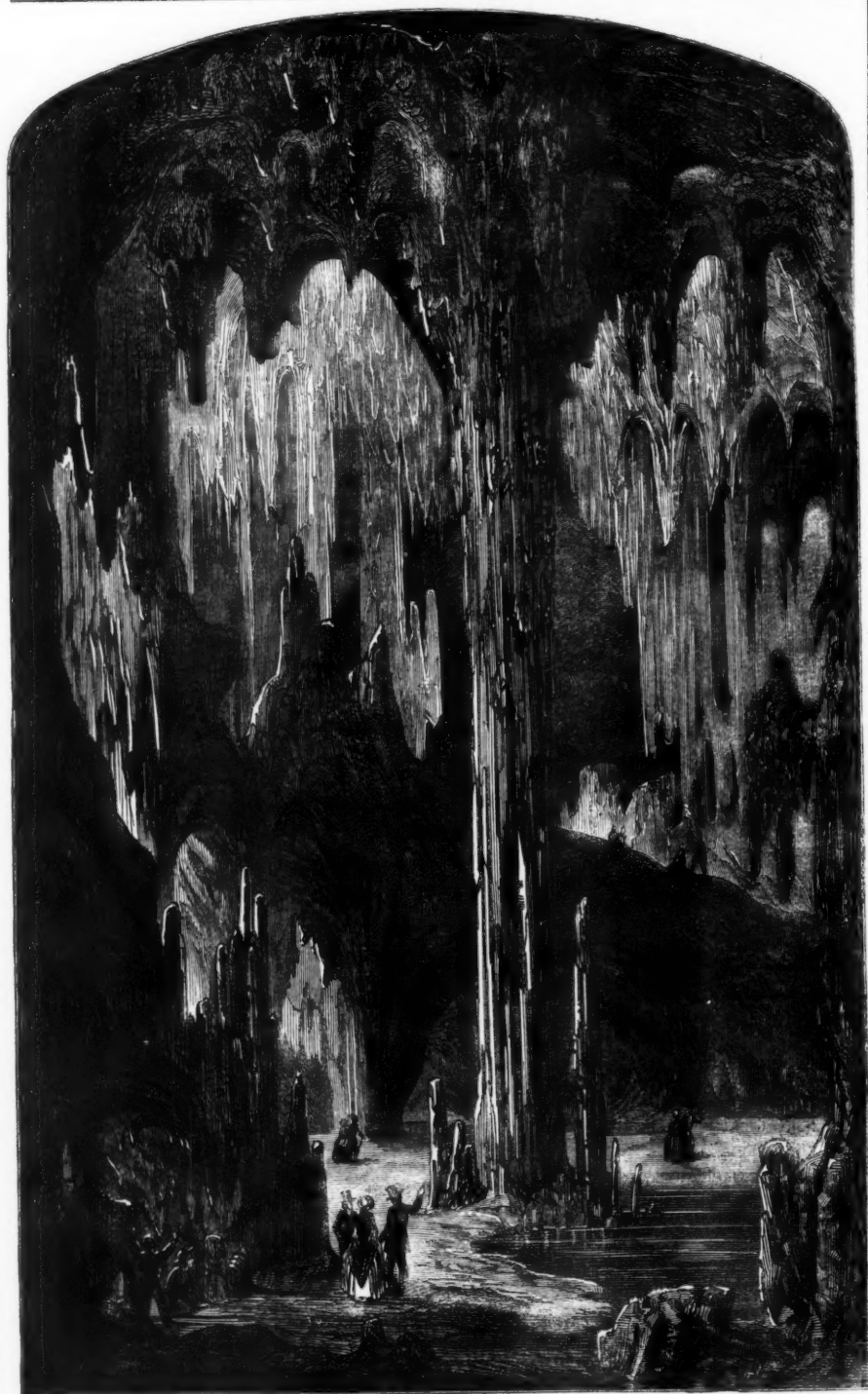
cautions was of more consequence than we in our ignorance could believe possible.

Leaving the inn, we proceeded along a picturesque path, through green pastures, up and down finely-shaped hills, a bright gushing river foaming and tumbling along at no great distance from us; when suddenly, as it were, a solid wall of rock seemed to rise up in front of us, barring all egress in that direction. The highest point of the cliff was crowned by the ruins of a castle, whilst, beneath a projecting shelf of the rock, the very river that we had watched in its bright gambols seemed to precipitate itself into the bowels of the earth, there losing itself in the dense darkness of those subterranean regions! Immediately above this overhanging shelf might be seen what bore the appearance of a small hole, defended by an iron grating, and through this opening, we were told, lay the entrance to the stupendous cave.

An indescribable feeling of awe, almost amounting to terror, came over me as I gazed upwards at the solid cliff, and downwards at the rushing river, at the thought of thus penetrating, as it were, into the very centre of these dark and mysterious regions, thus invading nature in her dreariest domains. For a moment I drew back hesitatingly; but curiosity prevailed over the passing hesitation, and onwards I went, the first of the whole party, and in another moment I had crossed the gloomy portal, and passed on into the first low gallery—an entrance how unlike the scenes it was about to unfold before my enraptured gaze!

This first gallery is so very low and narrow, that it is with difficulty you contrive to stumble along it, wholly unable to observe anything on either side of you, and trusting entirely to the firm hold you retain of the guide's hand for your safe advance. You have only a vague idea that you are penetrating into the very bowels of the earth, from the damp and mouldy air that clings all around you, folding you, as it were, in an earthen mantle, and oppressing you by the peculiar smell of underground vapours. A pale star glimmers in front of you, making the intervening darkness only seem the more opaque from the contrast; but onwards, still onwards, you advance till the sound of rushing waters falls on your startled ear, and down, far down below, the depth seeming greater from the uncertain light, you just discern the glimmer of the torch, reflected in the trembling waters of the river which you last saw sparkling and shining in the brilliant sunbeams. While gazing at this flickering light, and reflecting upon the singular course of the stream, I had continued to advance almost unconsciously; so that the scene which I am about to describe came upon me with the most startling suddenness.

I was the first in the line of spectators, and on emerging from the low gallery just named, the path makes an abrupt turn round a sharp angle in the rocky wall; thus, when the guide, in his queer *patois* language, bade me look up, the wondrous scene in all its unrivalled grandeur lay spread before me. How poor and unequal are words to do justice to such a spectacle; but we must try. Let the reader, then, picture to himself a vast hall, of more than 300 feet long and 120 high, the



roof absolutely lined with the most beautiful stalactites, the walls apparently formed of the same ever-varying and exquisite materials, the whole lighted up in a way best calculated to display the beauties of the cavern. The guides understand this part of their business so well, that, provided they are not stinted in the necessary funds, the enjoyment of the spectators will be rendered as perfect as the nature of the scene admits. The change was so sudden, from the stooping confined posture in the low entrance to an upright position in the midst of so much light and lustre, that at first I was only struck by the extraordinary grandeur of the *coup d'œil*; but by degrees, as I was enabled to admire more in detail, I was absolutely lost in admiration at the matchless finish displayed in every minute part of these gorgeous decorations. Gaze on which side we pleased, some new form of beauty greeted us. Here, it seemed as if the massive pillars of some stately pile had been transferred to these subterranean regions, in order to support the mighty dome, so perfectly did they wear the semblance of columns carved out of the solid stone; there, light and delicate forms, resembling nature's fairest creations, would hang from the vast ceiling or overshadow us as we advanced, like the pendent branches of some weeping ash. Springing up from the floor, the same strange creations of this singular material would, as it were, meet the pendent branches or arched canopies, which were suspended everywhere around the visitor, enclosing him in a labyrinth, as it seemed, of these peculiar formations. It must be borne in mind that nothing can exceed the purity of colouring, or the transparency and delicacy of these stalactites; many of them are like fine crystals, and reflect the lights in a most remarkable manner. But I must pass on, as I have so much still to relate.

The *dom*, as the great hall is called, was for a considerable time supposed to form the whole extent of the cave, though the peasants affirmed that it was of much vaster dimensions. They proved to be right, though on what basis they grounded their assertions has never appeared. Some clearing work was being done in the known part of the cave, when one of the men knocked down what had hitherto been considered a solid wall, and thus discovered that by far the most extensive part of the cave yet remained unexplored. Chamber after chamber rewarded their exertions, till they had penetrated to the distance of two miles from the entrance, which is all that is generally visited by strangers, though the more daring sometimes insist upon the guides conducting them still further into the interior; but from all I could make out by dint of close questioning, gratified curiosity seems to have been their only reward, as the beautiful stalactites appear to change their character in the farthest recesses of these mysterious abodes, and in many parts wholly disappear, leaving only the wall or roof of rugged rock. But to return.

After gazing again and again, and yet lingering for one more last look, I was forced to leave this matchless spot, and proceed reluctantly on my way. We descended a flight of steps, rudely cut in the wall of the *dom*, and, arriving on the banks of the river, crossed it on a narrow

plank, which was rendered so slippery by the damp atmosphere and the constant falling of drops of water, that I was very thankful to find myself safe on the other side, slowly ascending another flight of steps, which conduct at once to the new part of the cave.

To describe in detail the numerous chambers of which it is composed would be impossible within my prescribed limits; but I will mention the most remarkable. There is no single one so vast as the *dom*, though the stalactites are even finer and more varied. In one chamber you could fancy yourself visiting the haunts of fairies, so exquisitely delicate, so fanciful, and so minute are the decorations. Here a throne stands out from the wall, so perfect in its proportions, so admirable in its design, that it might safely be taken for a model, and a very beautiful one. Suddenly your further advance seems stopped by a delicately transparent curtain falling across one of the rooms, which, on touching, you discover to be only another of these wonderful deceptions. Touch alone would convince a superficial observer of the illusion, so softly does the curtain fall, and so perfectly are the folds of drapery represented. No sound reaches the ear as you slowly advance, except the still dripping of water, as the crystal drops at the end of each stalactite fall softly on the floor beneath, where they produce in their turn stalagmites, which frequently may be seen almost uniting with the pendent ornaments above. Presently, the visitor may imagine himself in some Moorish temple, decorated with the most delicately carved columns; or a pointed minaret raises its spire to the dome; or, yet again, the scene changes to some favoured spot, where nature indulges in her wildest and most beautiful vagaries. The drooping branches of some of the vegetable wonders of the tropics enclose you, as it were, in their graceful arms, till, as you advance, the scene again changes, and a beauteous ball-room appears before you, in which these stalactites are so profusely scattered that the walls, the roof, the very floor, are all adorned with them.

The pride of man, we should conceive, must be humbled to see, even in the darkest and most secluded domain of nature, all his fairest works so far outdone! The varied objects formed by the falling drops of water would take years properly to study and to appreciate. They seem to rise, as it were, by magic. The very clefts of the rock, the niches in the walls, every spot where either the stalactites or the stalagmites can find a resting-place, are absolutely loaded with these rarely beautiful ornaments; at last the eyesight fairly wearies of their endless variety, and the dazzling effect which they produce when seen by the brilliant torch-light.

A singular circumstance is stated respecting the river so often referred to. Planks of wood thrown into the stream in the cave are said to reappear in the river Unz at Platina, where it bursts forth from the rocks. Whether the two rivers are identical, or whether streams issuing from the cavern convey the wood to the Unz, yet remains to be proved; but it is curious to think of the buried river coming forth again to light and life after passing through these dark and gloomy caves.

The ball-room is really used for festive purposes once every year, in the sunny month of June,

by the peasantry of Adelsberg and the surrounding hamlets. To us it seems a strange taste, to prefer this subterranean hall, however richly decorated, to the soft green grass and the brilliant light of the summer sun, canopied by the gorgeous blue sky! I was told that the scene presented on such occasions is most singular, and that the echoes of the music through all the different chambers and cavities of the grotto produce the most strange and unearthly sounds.

There are two of the stalactites so perfectly resembling the form of two hearts cut out of transparent crystal, that many of the uneducated people in the hamlet attach a sort of sacred character to them; and it is very much the habit of the young men and maidens, when a betrothal takes place, to seek this, to them, mystic chamber, and, with their hands placed on the two emblematic hearts, to pledge themselves solemnly to each other; and it is said that such is the power exercised by this strange fancy, that there is no instance known of vows thus taken ever remaining unfulfilled.

With the deepest regret did I at length turn away from the narrow portal of this mysterious grotto, thinking that, in all human probability, I should enter its dark and gloomy entrance no more. My expectations had been highly raised; I had previously seen the finest caverns in our own country; but no imagination could come near the wondrous and sublime reality. Let all who can do so judge of the truth of this assertion for themselves, by paying a personal visit to the spot. To those who are compelled to be stayers at home, the foregoing description is commended as affording a faint idea of the glories of the place.

Before concluding this sketch, I must just bestow a passing notice on a natural curiosity, which, though not strictly belonging to Adelsberg, was seen there by our party, and is in some measure associated with the mysterious river that runs through these dark regions. I allude to a creature, half-fish, half-lizard, which, though it does not breed in this cave, yet lives there in perfect health. It is called the protei, or proteus, and is of a sort of dull flesh colour; in the place where the gills would be in a fish, there are little branches of a coral-like substance and colour, which give the creature a most singular appearance. It can breathe equally well below and above the water, and it is found in considerable numbers in the Magdalen grotto, about three miles from Adelsberg; but, in the stream of the last-named cave, there are many kept to satisfy the curiosity of strangers. They are unknown in any other part of Europe, though it is said that they have been found in Sicily. They are certainly most appropriate inhabitants of the strange scene in which they dwell.

THE STREET TRADERS OF PARIS.

THE traveller who has watched the phases of popular life in the streets of Paris during the last twenty or thirty years, and who compares the social condition of the lower and lowest classes now with what it was at the commencement of Louis Philippe's rule, will have noticed a remarkable change both in the popular manners and in

the modes of getting a living. Many of the old street trades have been abolished, either by the interference of the police or by their own unremunerativeness, and some that were offensive to decency and morality, if not suppressed, have been banished from the public view. What may be called peripatetic shop-keeping is no longer legal; and now, with some few exceptions in favour chiefly of things to be eaten or drunk, or things supposed to be curative or known to be perishable, the shopkeeper who pays rent and taxes has no longer a rival in the squatter upon the kerb-stone, unless said rival has some new invention of his own to promulgate for the benefit of his fellow citizens and his own. Whether it be that these restrictions upon the spontaneous industry of the poor have driven them to harder shifts, and made the business of getting a living a more difficult and serious matter than it used to be; or whether it be that the present dearthness of provisions has subdued their natural hilarity, we do not pretend to say; but it is very certain that the old rollicking, thoughtless light-heartedness which used to characterise the perambulating trader, has in a great measure disappeared. He is by no means so full of fun and frolic as he used to be, and if, as he does now and then, he gives way to his constitutional vivacity one minute, you may see his brown face contracting the next to an expression of solidity symptomatic of a secret sense of responsibility, which in times of yore rarely darkened his countenance. From indications of this sort, and from others which will presently appear, we have come to the conclusion, while contemplating the many shifts and the earnest struggles of the vagabond classes who live from hand to mouth, that the poor of Paris have just now a hard battle to fight to keep the wolf from the door. The dogged persistency with which some of the singular avocations we are about to notice are pursued, is at the same time an instructive as well as a suggestive spectacle; nor is the scene, taken in the whole, at all wanting in the elements of the picturesque or the amusing.

We shall briefly describe these offshoots of commerce and industry, as we chanced to meet them, from such notes as we had time to make on the spot, and without any attempt at classification, or at determining their several claims to precedence.

On walking along the Boulevards the stranger will see, situated at measured intervals of something less than a furlong each, a series of watch-boxes standing on the boundary line between the promenade and the carriage-road. They are of the precise pattern which the old London watchmen used to inhabit, and one might fancy that at the establishment of the new police they had all been transported from England for the use of the French, who had glazed the upper half of their fronts. Each one is inhabited by a man or woman, who sits there from morning to near midnight behind a bundle of the daily papers published in Paris. The inside of the box above their heads is lined with placards of the several publications; a few of these lie neatly folded on a little platform level with the breast of the inmate; and on a narrow board above his or her head, inscribed "Vient de paraître" (just published), is the name of the last paper out—the "Moniteur," the "Con-

stitutionnel," the "Débats," or what not. These Jacks and Joans in boxes present an odd contrast to the bustling world in which they are placed, and we could compare them to nothing else than stakes driven firmly into the bed of a rushing stream, silent and motionless, while with unceasing clamour the ever-sounding current surges past. In fine weather they throw open the windows, and now and then make a faint appeal for the patronage of the public; but when the cold blast comes along or the rain patters down, they make all tight and compose themselves to slumber. At what hour they evacuate their dens we know not; we have passed them within a few minutes of midnight, and found the mistress comfortably asleep, sometimes with a child on each knee. A more striking type of the defunct condition of the public press in France, or a more remarkable contrast to the vitality of the same press in London, it is difficult to imagine. These prisoners are the news-agents of Paris, and, like our own newsman, receive a small profit on each copy they dispose of. Perhaps we have done them an injustice in numbering them with the vagabond traders; if so, we can only beg their pardon with all sincerity.

Having one morning early to cross the Place de Grève, we were attracted by a crowd of blouses standing on the precise spot where the guillotine used formerly to take up its position. On drawing near, we beheld a tall, red-faced, beardless, shock-headed fellow, in rather shabby and tight-fitting garb, standing in the centre of the group, and holding forth, at the utmost pitch of his voice, upon the merits of a small green-covered volume, some twenty copies of which he held in his hand. His ear-splitting voice rang like a clarion, and the stream of eloquence poured rapidly from his lips in one unbroken torrent, without a moment's pause, for ten full minutes. "Ecoutez, mes amis" (listen, my friends), he said. "We have arrived at a grand crisis in the history of the peoples. The dogs of war are let slip, blood has begun to flow, and the beginning of the end is not in sight. Russia has thrown off the mask; the barbarians of the north have sworn to reap the harvests of southern Europe. They have rushed upon our ally the sultan, and our braves have gone forth to meet the czar's band in the Crimea. Where is the Frenchman who would remain in ignorance of the history of this glorious war—a war in which the honour of France is concerned, in which she fights for the first time by the side of the noble English—a war which is to decide the destiny of the world. Now look you, my friends, *c'est moi qui ai écrit ce volume* (I have written this volume myself) for your instruction. Here you have the origin of the war—the first mendacious quarrel with the Turk, whom, as our ally, we are bound to protect. Then you have the whole conduct of the war from the beginning—the massacre at Sinope—the defence of Silistria—the landing of the allies in the Crimea—the battle of the Alma—the battle of Balaclava, the battle of Inkermann and the siege of Sebastopol. *En suite*, you have a memoir of St. Arnaud, general François, of general Bosquet, of general Pelissier, of 'Amiral Boksare,' and of 'Milor R-r-r-aglan;'" and so on to the extent of a column more at least. When he had ceased, while the perspiration

streamed from his face, he held the books aloft in his left hand, and stroked them kindly down the back as one might a kitten; then he fondled them on his sleeve, and looking around, collected his breath for a new exordium. Poor fellow! his is a sad plight for an author, thought we; keep us from writing modern history and being compelled to turn our own trumpeter in the market-place.

Passing near the Louvre, in the rear, where the new buildings were in progress, we were surprised by seeing, among the huge masses of stone tilted from the wagons, a number of monster paper banners bearing very significant inscriptions. One bore the words "Aux Malades," and was an invitation to all afflicted with any one of a long catalogue of disorders to draw near and purchase exemption from all future penalties of that kind, in the shape of a packet of medicine warranted to perform a perfect cure. Another exhibited the words "Mort aux Punaies," and a modest paragraph beneath insinuated, with what truth we do not pretend to affirm, that those unmentionable gentry were under an obligation to the advertiser, to come out of their holes and be killed by anybody in possession of the talisman, which he would be happy to sell them for the paltry sum of ten sous. Behind a spindle-shanked table covered with a yellow cloth, upon which stood a few phials, steel instruments, and portly-looking pill-boxes, stood a professor of dental surgery, and we know not what besides. He was ready, according to his own account, to cure any curable disease, and perform any operation short of cutting off a limb, then and on the spot. All aches and pains he professed to cure instantaneously by a magic lotion only one franc the bottle; and if we are to believe the evidence of our eyes, which is sometimes deceptive when there is an accomplice in the case, he did cure at once a man who came forward groaning with the toothache, and submitted a mouthful of extra black grinders to the test of his experiments. The flag of another settler enlarged on the delights of a wonderful perfume; and after him came a professor with a royal road to arithmetic, who was followed in his turn by an eradicator of corns and bunions, who would set your toes at liberty on the terms of no cure no pay. Besides all these there was the temporary settlement of a dog and cat doctor; and that of one who called himself a friend of the human race, who had something to sell, but what it was we could not get near enough to see.

There is generally a pretty large assembly on a summer's evening on the Place de la Bastille, gathered round the column of July, where they are sure to break up into separate groups as night draws on, lured by the attraction of some songster, fiddler, or juggler, who promises them amusement. Approaching one of these groups, we found standing in the centre a young girl, sunburnt, pleasing, and good-looking, dressed in the costume of the *cantinière*, or camp-follower of the army. She wore scarlet trowsers, a short blue jacket-frock, and a little white apron; a tricolor costume, which was repeated in her head-dress, formed of a kind of tricoloured plaid. Under her arms, and supported by a strap over her shoulder, she carried a small barrel also tricoloured, from which she dispensed occasionally a draught of lemonade to a customer. Her chief merchandise, however, was a bundle of

small song-books abominably printed, and each one stitched in a fragment of wall-paper not one-third the size of the page. She sung the songs, which contained nothing objectionable, in a pleasing voice, and with something like professional style, and invited those who bought them to accompany her with their own voices, that they might learn the tune. We may remark, here, that nothing is allowed to be sung or sold in the streets of Paris that is not licensed by the minister of the interior, and bears his blue stamp upon it. The pretended *cantinière* no doubt performs her part with the perfect concurrence of the authorities, and, in singing the praises of the brave army, may have helped to supplement its ranks. We should look in vain at the present moment in Paris, among the street minstrelsy, for anything deserving to be compared with the disgusting and ribald indecency of the London street-patterers: a free press has its evils as well as its advantages.

Taking a rush-bottomed chair in front of a well-known café in the Boulevards, and beckoning to the *garçon* to bring a slight refreshment, we were enjoying it in a half-abstracted mood, when we felt a gentle tug at the collar of our coat, and looking down saw a little hand and arm fixing the bud of a moss-rose in one of the button-holes. A gentle "Pardonnez m'sieur" was uttered in response to the movement we made, and the child who spoke the words moved off to dispose of her small basket of flowers in a similar way among the remainder of the group. When the basket was empty she returned to the front, and there, crossing her arms before her, quietly awaited the result. Nobody appeared to notice either her or her flowers for some time; but at length a lady seated before us, pushed a small tray towards her husband, who dropped a coin into it and passed it round to all who wore the flowers. Nearly all of them added a trifle, and then the lady, beckoning to the child, dropped the contents of the tray into her basket. Curtseying low several times, and smiling gratefully at the company, the flower-girl departed. Time was, it is said, when the flower-girls of the Boulevards made large gains, and banked considerable sums; and their fortunes have formed the staple of more than one romance illustrative of Parisian life. We must confess that we saw nothing to warrant the probability of any stories of the romantic kind. The flower-girl of the Boulevards gives away her flowers instead of selling them, and throws herself upon the generosity of the public for a return. It may well be that she is often deceived by the result, and has to balance a gain one day by a loss on another.

The restrictions laid upon the press in France, taken in connection with the tax levied upon all printed documents intended for circulation, have nearly ruined the printing trade. The bill-sticker, once so important a functionary, has almost vanished into thin air, and his place is supplied by the stenciller, who paints upon the few walls and posts which the march of improvement has left available for the purpose, those public announcements which, owing to the scant use of them allowed, it is now cheaper to paint than to print. As a consequence, the printer, to find employment for his types, is obliged to speculate on his own

account. One of his main resources is the printing of programmes; and no sooner is a fête thought of or a public spectacle of any kind set on foot, than forth comes the programme, containing details of all that is to be seen, enlivened with criticisms on the getting-up of the spectacle, and biographical notices of the artists employed. The hawk of programmes meets you everywhere—at the doors of all places of public amusement, at the railway stations, at Sèvres, at St. Cloud, at Versailles, at the river side, and thrusts his flimsy sheet or his yellow pamphlet into your face, with an assurance that its possession is indispensable to your perfect enjoyment of the pleasure of the hour, whatever it may be. He is an active, sturdy fellow, with a look of authority, and will talk down your objections to purchase with a volubility that leaves you no chance, and is given to throw you a dry joke into the bargain you are forced to make with him.

Another exponent of the strait-waistcoated condition of the advertising press of Paris is the bill-distributor. That functionary, with us, is anybody the shop-keeper can pick up for a trifle to perform a merely mechanical service—a shop-boy, a street urchin, or a labourer out of work. In Paris he is quite another sort of personage, and that for a very good reason. A London tradesman who wants to give a fillip to his business, thinks nothing of printing a hundred thousand bills, and pushing them into everybody's hands. If a Parisian prints a hundred thousand handbills, he has to pay, in addition to the 3*l.* the printer would charge for them, 200*l.* more or thereabouts, in discharge of the *timbre impérial*, or a half-penny each copy. This is a very sufficient reason why they should *not* go into the hands of everybody; and therefore the bill-distributor must not be anybody, but a person of some tact and discrimination, able to judge and measure the crowd as they pass before him, and wise enough to cast his valuable seed on a promising soil. He is better paid than the same functionary with us, and he shows his regard for his employer's property by disposing of it with caution; he will deliberately con your garb and countenance before he hands you the document, and, if you crumple it disdainfully, will reclaim it, or recover it if you drop it on the ground. You may recognise him from afar by his red pantaloons, blue waistcoat, and comical hat.

At the corner of every street of any pretensions in Paris, and in the little back-lying recesses of some that are short of corners, stands the commissionaire. He is always visible, because it is always his interest to push himself into notice; and you may know him in an instant by his uniform of blue velvet and the parabolic brass badge glittering on his breast, which is a guarantee both of his honesty and good conduct. This decent, well-behaved fellow is invaluable as well to the stranger as the resident. He stands in the open street as the servant of society in general, and, entrust him with whatever commission you may, he will perform it with a precision and fidelity, and with a celerity too, that will more than satisfy you. He is the depositary of secrets, but he is never known to blab. He is a man of honour, and because you *must* confide in him you

may. There is nothing that he cannot do, and does not do, in a useful way. If the house wants setting in order—painting, papering, polishing, or roof-mending—he will tell you at once who will do it cheapest, who will do it best, who will do it quickest; and the chance is that, if there is not a great deal to be done, he will do it himself—and do it well. He is employed by the Parisians in an endless variety of services, and may be entrusted with the most valuable property either to sell or to pawn, and will render a true account to the last fraction. He is never out of the way or hard to find, and is never weary. He will work all day, and watch all night by the sick; he brings the midwife to the birth, and the undertaker to the funeral, and serves his patrons, the public, all their lives long at the moderate charge of about half a franc an hour. He is the veritable factotum of the highway. Abolish him, and you cut off a limb from the social body of the great capital. His enemies say that he is a spy, and reports everything to the police; the insinuation is a slander, the police system being complete without him.

Are you going to visit one of the hospitals? do you want to inspect the Louvre? would you like to look over Notre Dame? are you disposed to wander among the tombs of Père la Chaise? are you going anywhere, in short, on a visit of curiosity? If you are, be sure of one thing—the guide will find you out and stick to your skirts till you engage him in your pay; so the best thing you can do is to hire him at once by the hour, suck him dry as fast as you can, and then discharge him and make the best use of his information afterwards. The guide in a very various sort of personage, and the figure he cuts is generally proportionate to the importance of the place or the institution to which he attaches himself. Sometimes he is a tall, consequential, semi-shabby, semi-genteel adult; sometimes he is a little dirty tag-rag of a *gamin*, giving himself the airs of a man; sometimes it is a woman doing the duty on behalf of her absent husband; but in the churches it is always the Swiss, or beadle, who is notorious for an itching palm, and who will proportion the revelations he makes, and the wonders he shows you, to the estimate he forms of your liberality, which experience has taught him to measure beforehand from data furnished by your outward man.

If you meet a man past the middle age, clad in the remains of an old military suit, and stuck about the breast, sides, and shoulders, with bits of shining metal in the shape of buckles, sword-hilts, padlocks, clasps, links of a chain, butt-ends of pistols, etc. etc., you may conclude safely that you have fallen in with a professional polisher of metal. In Paris, shining brass and copper play a much more notable part both within doors and without than they do here; they are the metals military and culinary; and to keep them constantly in a brilliant condition is a *sine qua non* in both departments. But a soldier of the national guard can employ his time better in looking after his shop or his counting-house than in rubbing up his accoutrements; and for that reason he does not rub them up, but consigns them periodically to the travelling polisher, who, at the cost of a few pence, will put them in capital trim. When there are no arms to clean, the polisher will work at the brass

plates and barriers of the shop-windows, or the front door; he will not turn up his nose at a set of harness either; and at the slightest suggestion from the housekeeper, he will transport his rotten-stone, rags, and chamouis-leather to the kitchen, where he will commence a general assault upon the kettles and stew-pans. When thus domesticated, however, he is accused of prolonging his manipulations an unreasonable time, with a view to solacing himself with the remains of the dinner—an expectation in which, so far as we could learn, he is seldom disappointed.

The other day, on passing along the quay in the old city, we fell in with a strange figure, who was girdled around with traps, gins, and snares of various kinds, more or less ingenious, and who carried before him a long pole, from which depended a cluster of dried skins, and a dozen or so of yet warm and bleeding bodies of unfortunate rats. The man hoisted his pole aloft, and now and then, in a hollow sepulchral voice, uttered the words "*Mort aux rats*," an announcement which was not needed to tell us that he was a ratcatcher by profession. He had neither dogs nor ferrets to assist him in his vocation, only baits and traps; but his labours are invariably successful. The Paris ratcatcher is paid by the head for the death of his victims, and if he catches none makes no charge; what he does catch are, however, his own property, and as rats are merchandise in Paris, he knows how to turn them to account. Among the more ignorant classes of the faubourgs this worthy is in bad odour, and looked upon with a suspicious eye; they cannot comprehend by what means he prevails upon all the rats of a district to come into his traps; they have an idea that such a strange influence is what the Scotch call "*uncanny*," and therefore it is that with them the *mort aux rats*, if he have not the reputation of a sorcerer, is looked upon with distrust, which, as it acts to deter rivals from the trade, the fellow is at no pains to remove.

Much has been said and written about the *gamin* of Paris, but he has never yet been described in a recognisable way, and never will, for the reason that he is never the same being for two days together. The pressure of the times has latterly propelled him too into the industrial channel, and we see him now working for his bread under the eye of the ever-present police, with as variable a disposition as characterised him when he was but a mischievous idler, or an irresponsible insurrectionist. One day he is selling cigars and tinder in the Champs Elysées, and the next in Marais, crying a particular account of some horrid murder. Now he tries his hand at cleaning boots on the Quai d'Orçay; and, sick of that before the month is out, may be seen, as a next experiment, half up to his neck in the Seine, fishing for gudgeons and bleak, of which, if he is lucky, he catches half a pound in the course of the day, for which he will get fourpence. It is the *gamin* who in summer time strips and dives in the river after small coins foolishly flung in to tempt him, and in winter follows his patrons to the ice, and picks up a dinner by ministering to their enjoyments and his own. Now you find him on the Boulevards with an armful of walking-sticks, for which he demands thrice the amount that he means to take, and thinks himself

a model of perseverance if he does not throw up his commission, and return the sticks to their owner so soon as he has disposed of enough to cover his expenses for the day. At another time we catch him with an open basket selling watch-guards, glass-guards, steel pens, neck-chains, etc., all of which he knows are contraband, on the pavement; he is attended by an accomplice, at whose signal, whistled from afar, a descending flap from the cover of his basket transforms his stock into a collection of patriotic songs, each bearing the blue stamp of authority. Then, when a new coinage makes its appearance, we have him again, retailing the shining impressions of the new issue at a profit of twenty per cent. upon their value—a trade which never lasts long, but which, thanks to the political mutations France seems destined to undergo, is pretty often renewed. When he is out of cash and out of credit with all the world—a consummation to which the *gamin* is no stranger—he goes forth, hunger driven, to wait for a chance; then, if he can manage it, he will intercept the customers of the commissionaire, and do the commission, if he can get it, at half-price. If it threaten rain, he will earn a sou or two by running in search of cabs for those who want them; and if a torrent pours down suddenly he has a peculiar talent in stopping a drain and collecting a complete pond in the gutter, over which he throws a bridge, made of a plank borrowed from the wood-shop; the bridge is of course a toll-bridge, and the *gamin* collects the tolls, which if the storm is considerate enough to last an hour or so, puts him in funds again. There is really no limit to the ways and means to which the *gamin* will resort when hard necessity comes upon him; and, on the other hand, it is likely that there is no advantage you could offer him which would bind him to the permanent prosecution of any single species of industry.

We shall take the liberty now to look in for a moment at one of the houses of call where the street-traders of Paris, some of whom we have described above, resort for that indispensable item in our daily life—a dinner, when they have fortune enough to earn one. The poor must dine as well as the rich, and there are not wanting in Paris the means of refreshment for the humblest classes. Beneath the saloons of many a superb *café* in the Palais Royal, glittering in crystal and silver, there are cellars accessible from a back entrance, where the relics of the dinners at five francs—the rags of shin of beef, the fragments of made dishes and of rejected vegetables and salads—are compounded into a savoury stew, dispensed in damaged crockery at five sous the basin. There are the *guinguettes*, where the broken viands of yesterday's banquet are doled out at a cheap rate to the hungry vagrant, who must dine for a few pence if he dine at all. There are the fish-shops, where a dish of flounders and soles, not bigger than the palm of your hand, mingled with potatoes chopped raw and fried with lard, may be had for threepence, with a lump of bread into the bargain. There are the stewed herb-stalls in the purlieus of the market, where the poorest may stay his hunger for a penny. In a word, there is a market for every man's necessities, adapted to his means, however small. If we turn our

steps towards the Halle au Blé, or corn-market, we shall not be long in finding within the shadows of that monstrous, burly building, the place we are in search of. In this region it does not happen to be a cellar—cellars and underground floors being few in Paris—on the contrary, it is a room at the back of the first floor, and admitting the light from the roof. Solid tables of rough massive timber surround the apartment within a couple of feet from the walls, and on each side of the continuous tables are wooden benches as rough, and not more than eight inches wide. There is neither plate nor crockery to these surrounding tables, which are appropriated to the class who dine at twopence a head; but the blocks forming the tables are dug into hollows, representing basins and soup-plates, and are covered with iron covers chained to the table. For his twopence the diner gets a basin of vegetable soup, a lump of bread, a dish of "mountaineers" (a kind of coarse bean), and a cup of coffee with a lump of sugar in it. To this bill of fare, if he is fortunate, he can produce something from his pocket; and if he use knife, fork, or spoon, he must produce that from his pocket also, as the establishment declines to furnish them. When he has finished, he is expected to "clear," as the Americans say, immediately, in favour of the next comer. The *garçon* watches his progress, and the moment the last mouthful is disappearing, dashes water on the table, mops out the hollows, and replaces the covers for a new customer. In the centre of the room are several tables on which are seen the civilised appliances of dinner—plates, basins, knives, forks, etc. Here the charge for dinner mounts up to fivepence, and the fare is bread soup, and a single plate of a hash of various meats mingled together, besides a modicum of some sort of wine.

It is here, or at some such place as this, that we shall find at their meals not a few of the wayside industrials above described; and in addition to them, were we to lie in wait for them, we should soon learn to recognise a host of others. It is here that the date-merchant, disguised like a Turk, doffs his turban, and talks the undeniable slang of the faubourgs while cooling his soup. Here comes the poor sweep after the toil of the morning—which, by the way, never reduces him to the semblance of a negro—to spend his hard-earned pence. Here the chiffonnier, released from his tall basket, recreates himself after his labours. Here, also, come the toy-merchant, the seller of chickweed, the *pieman*, the marchand de coco, the street shoe-black, the dog-clipper, the travelling tinker, the poor ragged child who sells lucifer matches, the organ grinder, the barley-sugar woman, the beignet-merchant, the fruit-woman, the water-carrier, the mason's labourer, and the artisan and handicraftsman of whatever grade or calling, who has been long out of employ. We fear that we might add indefinitely to the list without exceeding the truth: many a poor artist, professor, and author have been known in times past, reduced by "impecuniosity" (let us use a gentle term) to have recourse to the hospitality of the *halle*; and we can call to mind more than one well-rounded period from the lips of men of education so unfortunately situated, expressive of thankfulness for a resource, which, wretched as it is, administers to the simple wants of nature

at the minimum cost, and by retarding the abrupt descent to actual destitution, gives the failing spirit the opportunity to recover courage. Far be it from us even to suggest a contemptuous thought in reference to the *ménage* of industrious poverty. The "uses of adversity" extend to those who witness as well as those who suffer it; and he who would derive advantage from them must find in the contemplation of such scenes and characters as we have here briefly depicted, food for the exercise of faculties very different from those of indifference, contempt, or scorn.

THE STUDY OF A PRAWN.

HAVING during the years 1852 and 1853 had the opportunity of making some observations on the natural habits and minute characteristics of the common prawn, *Palaemon serratus*, which I understand are novel, I have been induced to collect the results together and submit them to the readers of this Journal.*

The observations about to be detailed were made in small tanks or aquaria, in which the balance between the animal and vegetable organisms in a medium of sea water was permanently maintained without artificial aëration or disturbance. The materials employed for effecting this, in the aquarium now under consideration, consisted of the *Uva latissima* and *Enteromorpha* as the vegetable members of the circle; several varieties of *Actinia*, *Madrepora*, *Annelida*, and *Palaemon*, to represent the animal section; while the functions of the scavenging mollusks were fulfilled by *Littorina*, *Trochus*, and *Purpura*. The small tank, containing these several organised members, was constructed of a zinc framing three feet in length, one foot in depth, and one foot in breadth, having the bottom, ends, and back filled with slate, and the front, or part towards the observer, glazed with plate-glass, the whole being covered over loosely by a shade partially glazed, so as to impede the evaporation of the water, exclude as much as possible the soot and dust of the London atmosphere, while, at the same time, a continual change of air could take place. A quantity of rock-work was also introduced, and so arranged that the creatures could readily find a retreat, or screen themselves from the strong influence of the sun's rays during the day, and from the numbing effects of radiation in a clear night. A short and small shingle beach was also constructed at one extremity of the aquarium, to enable the various denizens to retreat to shallow water whenever they should be so inclined.

Into this vessel, thus arranged, several individuals of the common prawn were introduced during the months of October and November, 1852; they were fed every second or third day with small pieces of either oyster, mussel, cockle, shrimp, and the like, or, when these could not be obtained, with softened shreds of raw lean meat which had been previously dried by exposure to the air in order to preserve it from putrefaction, and allow of its being kept as a store of provision

capable of being had recourse to as occasion might require.

The manner in which these beautiful creatures take their food while foraging about the tank is very interesting. The first and second pair of didactylous feet are cautiously and continuously thrust into every cranny, around and partially under the pebbles and rock-work, and often into the tubes of *Serpula* or *Sabellæ*, or the shells of the univalve mollusks and others; and these, if not protected by an operculum or some provision for closing the orifice of their tube or shell, soon fall a prey to their attacks. When anything edible is met with, it is rapidly seized by these prehensile feet and transferred to the jaws.

The senses of touch and smell in the *Palaemonidæ* are exceedingly delicate, the latter appearing to reside most strongly in the antennæ. Thus, when a small particle of food has been dropped in the water and has sunk to the bottom, the moment the antennæ of the prawn in its movements pass across the column of water through which the food has fallen, the whole motion of the creature becomes changed in an instant, and it darts rapidly here and there, from the surface throughout the path of its transit, until it is discovered; and often, after it has been devoured by the one, a second prawn will, on reaching the same locality, gain the scent and hunt over every spot in search of that which has been already removed, but which evidently had left its track of odour behind. It has very often occurred that if some one of the *Actinæ* had been first fed, the *Palaemon*, on gaining the scent, has tracked the food to the *Actinia* and speedily rifled it of its repast; and, in instances where the latter had even transferred its meal by means of its tentacula to its pouch, the prawn has redoubled its efforts, and frequently dragged the savoury morsel out of its very stomach. This operation it effects in a very surprising manner: *Palaemon* charges, without any apparent fear, full on the extended disk of the *Actinia*, the tentacula of which it keeps in constant play by means of its three pairs of unarmed feet, while, at the same time, one of the second or larger pair of prehensile feet is thrust into the orifice of its maw, and the food forcibly and quickly extracted. The only chance the poor *Actinia* has of preventing this and securing its feast, appears to be by contracting the whole of its tentacula together, and thus forming itself into a small globular form, so as to close entirely all approach to the orifice of its stomach. The energy with which this attack is effected depends very much on the keenness of the prawn's appetite, and, in cases where the *Actinia* is strong and also very hungry, the conflict is often very severe, and the aggression is sometimes, though rarely, successfully repelled.

When in full swimming action, the appearance of these beautifully transparent creatures is most elegant. The front feet are generally laid backward and tucked under the body like the fore legs of the deer tribe in the act of leaping; the long and delicate antennæ stream gracefully on each side of its body, and float for some distance beyond its entire length, while its strong abdominal paddles propel it rapidly through the water. In the aquarium under consideration, the whole of these elegant creatures were in the habit, on the summer

* From a paper on "The Natural History and Habits of the Common Prawn," by Robert Warrington, esq., which appeared in "The Annals and Magazine of Natural History," for April, 1855.

evenings, of careering to and fro for upwards of an hour's duration, close to the glass front of the case and towards the room, presenting a most pleasing object, and one which must be observed in order to be appreciated, as no description can convey an adequate idea of the interesting scene.

It is also a curious and striking phenomenon to observe these *Palaemonide* by the aid of a lighted candle or lamp in a dark room during the night, in consequence of the bright reflection of the luminous body from their prominent pedunculated eyes; and as the prawn does not retain a stationary position, but slowly roams about through the water and over the rock-work seeking for its food, it adds an increased interest to the appearance, to behold these small globes of bright light, like the bull's-eye signal lamps of a miniature railway engine looming through the distance in a dark night, moving slowly along, the body of the creature being quite imperceptible, and nothing visible but these pairs of globular balls of fire shining from out the dark water. Even the small eyes of an allied species, that remarkable little crustacean, the *Athanas nitescens*, exhibit the same effect, although from their shy habits and diminutive size it can be but rarely observed.

When the period arrives at which the *Palaemon serratus* is about to throw off its old external covering, it ceases to feed, and seeks about from spot to spot in a restless and fidgety manner, until it has fixed on a locality apparently sufficiently adapted for the purpose required and suited to its fancy; for this really appears at times to be the case. The third, fourth and fifth pair of legs are then stretched out wide apart, and the feet hooked so as to hold firmly upon the surrounding substances, in such a way that the body may be poised and capable of moving freely in all directions, as though suspended on gimbals. The prawn then slowly sways itself to and fro, and from side to side, with strong muscular efforts, apparently for the purpose of loosening the whole surface of the body from the carapace; the two pair of prehensile or didactylous legs are at the same time kept raised from the ground, stretched forwards, and frequently passed over each other with a rubbing motion, as if to destroy any remaining adhesion; the eyes also may be observed to be moved within their covering by muscular contraction from side to side; and when every precaution appears to have been perfectly taken for the withdrawal of its body from its too limited habiliments, a fissure is observed to take place, between the carapace and the abdomen at the upper and back part, and the head, antennae, legs, feet and all their appendages, are slowly and carefully drawn backward and out from the dorsal shield until the eyes are quite clear of the body-shell or carapace, and appear above the upper margin of it; the prawn, thus half released, then makes a sudden backward spring or jerk, and the whole of the exuvium is left behind, generally adhering by the shell of the six feet to the surface it had selected for its purpose.

A moment's consideration will develop to the contemplative mind what a truly wondrous process this act of exuviation really is. When we reflect on the small size of this crustacean, and the extreme delicacy and intricacy of its various organs,

and then find that in this moulting, the shell of the most minute and complicated of these structures is thrown off in a complete and unruptured state, even to the gauze-like membrane covering the projecting and pedicled eye, the filamentous antennae, the many-jointed legs, the delicate didactylous hand, the padded abdomen with its beautiful appendages, the palpi, and all the minute spines and microscopic hairs with which these various members are provided,—the human mind can hardly appreciate the wonderful wisdom of the creative power that could have called into existence so marvellous an adaptation.

At the moment the prawn has been thus liberated from its old envelope, it rolls on the surface of the ground perfectly helpless, for it is at first, evidently, so soft, that it does not possess the power of supporting its own weight erect upon its feet, while the beautifully delicate antennae float from its head like gossamer threads through the water. In a short time, however, it plunges or springs, by a strong muscular exertion of the abdomen, from place to place, stretches its webbed tail and the large paddle of its swimming apparatus, and soon retreats into some dark and sheltered corner, where it remains, continually exercising its various organs, until such a period as the new investing membrane shall have become sufficiently hardened to allow of its venturing forth among its companions without danger, for during all this interval it is liable to their attacks whenever it comes near them, and is obliged by a series of forcible leaps rapidly to evade their attempts and escape out of their way. When the newly-coated *Palaemon* first makes its exit from its hiding-place, its appearance is doubly beautiful; the colours are so clear and bright, particularly the orange and rich brown bands which encircle the pale blue prehensile feet, the various markings are so defined, and the small spine and fringes of hair so clean and well developed, and the deportment of the creature itself is altogether so bold and vain-glorious, as though proud of its new vesture, that it cannot but command the admiration it seems to seek.

CONTENTMENT.

God sets bounds to our lot: let us, then, set bounds to our desires, and bring our mind to our condition.

A small estate honestly come by, which a man is content with, enjoys comfortably, serves God with cheerfully, and puts to a right use, is much better and more valuable than a great estate ill got, and then ill kept or ill spent. It carries with it more inward satisfaction, a better reputation with all that are wise and good; it will last longer, and will turn to a better account in the great day, when men will be judged, not according to what they had, but what they did.

There is no time lost while we are waiting God's time. It is as acceptable a piece of submission to the will of God to sit still contentedly when our lot requires it, as to work for him when we are called to it.

It is better to live poorly upon the fruits of God's goodness, than live plentifully upon the products of our own sin.

It much more deserves and demands our care, what estate we shall go to in the other world when we die, than what estate we shall then leave behind us in this world.
—Matthew Henry.